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ABSTRACT

All proposed programs in foreign language instruction should be scrutinized and questioned in liberal-minded research centers, because this field seems to have arrived at an impasse. Two types of impasse are evident: "intrinsic" and "emergent." "Intrinsic" refers to built-in difficulties, those that are not artificially imposed on the learning-teaching process by programmers but that arise as a natural by-product of the attempt to teach a foreign language, such as time limit and artificiality. "Emergent" covers difficulties that are not inherent in the learning-teaching process, but are created by the programmers and specialists themselves, such as "linguisticism" and "holisticism." Lack of progress in the field can be traced further to the current over-systematization of language by linguists, which blinds programmers to the nature and functioning of language as a means of communication. This situation can be improved only by a shift of direction. (CFM)

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IMPASSES AND REVERSALS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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C.R.A.P.E.L.

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Despite all the claims to large-scale success in the field of foreign-language teaching, the end-results merely testify to limited achievements only, with the huge problem of mass-instruction still haunting the field. It is not even quite certain if the limited success has been obtained because of, rather than in spite of, the procedures and programmes followed. It certainly cannot be denied that any intensive and concentrated effort will somehow result in some degree of proficiency on the part of the learner. But this does not necessarily mean that the existing programmes are sufficiently effective ; on the contrary, the older methods could be considerably worthless in actual practice. Pointing to the results of the tests might be equally misleading and deceptive, so long as the objectives of instruction and the criteria of testing are'her me tically' established by the programme itself. Such an attitude can very well be called the "fishbowl syndrome", according to which the fish in a bowl feels in the right environment, whereas the whole bowl itself might be in the wrong place. It is with such a view in mind that the part of the applied linguistics, dealing with foreign-language instruction might be considered as 'stuck' in a huge 'impasse' so to speak, in a kind of pedagogic cul-de-sac, from which it might not extricate itself under the circumstances, unless recourse is made to a radical reorientation. Although recently a breakthrough appears to be imminent more than ever, what with new hardware devices and with programming techniques, yet the whole directionality might have to be reversed from the non-natural 'hard' way, to the natural and 'easy' way, as is the case with the acquisition of the mother-native tongue. A novel reinterpretation of the nature of language as well as of the mother-tongue acquisition might indeed prove to be much more beneficial in finding diametrically opposite alternatives to the current ones than in insisting on forcing the dead-end street in which foreign-language teaching seems to be trapped at the moment. The future success therefore lies, not with self-righteous programmers, but rather with liberal-minded research centers where all proposed programmes can be scrutinized and questioned in a fundamental

manner, rather than be ratified according to a set of faulty misconceptions and predetermined criteria.

IMPASSES

There seem to be two types of impasses in which foreigh-language or alianguage instruction might currently be 'wedged', as it were.

Intrinsic

This indicates the built-in difficulties in the sense that they are not artificially imposed on the learning-teaching process by programmers, but they arise as a natural byproduct of the attempts to teach a foreign-language.

Time-limit

Since time is a non-reversable and non-producible commodity, its scarcity inevitably affects the process of foreigh-language instruction, as it does almost any procedure taking place in time. Although the all-pervasive time, and its ubiquitious limitation in a programme cannot be controlled, yet the parameter of instructional method can be modified so as to allow maximum advantage within a given time-period.

The time-limit seems to affect current programmes in two diametrically opposite ways. In the first instance, any degree of deficiency is ascribed to the time-limit, intrinsically imposed on the programme ; while in the second, the degree of efficiency predetermined for the programme is allowed to consume an unspecified period of time, not at all justifiable for the modest rate of achievement obtained. In such a case, the work might be said to have "expanded so as to fill the time available for its completion." Unless therefore the relative merits of various methods and programmes are objectively measured and evaluated according to a single set of criteria, rather than by self-established goals and by self-designed batteries of tests, there might be no escape from the perennial excuse that the time-period allowed is indeed too limited for the programme to operate efficiently.

The ultimate objective should, understandably enough, be the native proficiency and fluency, against which respective validities of various programmes could be measured, provided that the time-period utilized is taken into consideration. Such progress through time, such tempogress as it might be called, can be evaluated in terms of the effect it has

produced at the end of a time-period, measured for instance in the number of hours per week. Such a timeffect quotient or TQ might very well be applied to any programme whatsoever in a uniform and universal manner, thereby allowing a veritable and objective measurement of all programmes, as well as preventing any excuses that might have been put forward in an apparently justifiable manner.

Artificiality

Since a method is, by definition, a systematically 'constructed' procedure to attain a goal, then it is inevitable that it should be artificial in essence. Any method or programme of foreigh-language instruction must consequently be considered only as an ersatz version of the natural way of learning the mother-tongue. As a matter of fact, the constant and continual exposure to, or bombardment by, the mother-native tongue as well as the accompanying psycho-social conditions are no longer existent or duplicable for the learner of a foreign-language, whose contact with the language can in general be only intermittent. In order to recapture and reconstitute the original ambiance, recourse should necessarily be made to the process of simulation which is intrinsically artificial in nature.

One of the main problems in foreign-language teaching seems to be, however, not so much the artificiality of the simulation process as the lack of proper differentiation between two possible types of simulation.

The first might be called the 'quantitative' simulation in which the model presented differs from the original one, only in terms of scale and ratio, like the way a miniplane would differ from a huge airbus. Just as in the milk-powder process, the temporarily dispensible and subsequently reconstitutable water-content is deleted for efficiency's sake, with the essential ingredients remaining intact, so can the distinctions and points, initially irrelevant for the instructional purposes be discarded from the programme. The result would be, in this case, a veritably and genuinely functioning version of language, with an abundance of lacunae in the structural or lexical patterns as well as in the myriad paradigms, but a language in miniature form all the same.

The second type of simulation can be called 'qualitative', in the sense that the model presented is different from the original one in so many features and parameters that it can easily be considered 'denatured' so to speak, so far as genuineness is concerned. Although such a qualitatively artificial model can be defended for its ease of presentation and manipulation on the one hand, and of the exigencies and pressures of the time-limit on the other, yet the fact remains that the apparent efficacity

proves to be almost totally deceptive, once the real test is the actual use of the language rather than the closed-circuit manipulation within the limits of a programme.

For instance, the articulation of language is effected, as is known, in terms of physiological units of syllables which are themselves generally meaningless, whereas in teaching programmes the language is presented, even in phonetic transcription, in terms of meaningful linguistic units of morphemes and words :

i ti sa no pe nai rau di to ri um
it is an open air auditorium

Such a 'morphemication' process as against the 'syllabification' one is a veritable example of the qualitative distortion, which frustrates the learner when he is actually confronted with a genuinely and naturally pronounced sample of the foreign-language. Such artificial 'semanticization' in terms of meaningful units only serves the learner to have a deceptive self-satisfaction, so long as he remains within the boundaries of the programmes, and so long as he does not encounter real-life situations and actual usage.

In a similar manner, the same qualitative distortion is continued in the so-called 'simplified' versions of the foreign-language samples, with a view of easing the way towards full comprehension. Such a practice, however, still leaves the huge gap between this kind of skeletal presentation and the real usage of the foreign-language in question, thereby perpetuating the vulnerable points of a qualitative simulation. If the rationale behind such a procedure is the improvement of the rate of comprehension in a gradual manner, then the same objective can be reached through a quantitative simulation where, instead of simplified versions, a series of 'simple' but genuine samples of language can be presented, thus allowing the learner to feel 'at home' at least in some actual language situations ; whereas in the case of qualitatively simplified versions, he will always have to remain within the boundaries of the programme , since no genuine speaker of the foreign-language would be so obliging as the ones on the artificially transcribed programmes.

The same philosophy of such a qualitative misconstruction, in the name of systematic hence efficient instruction can be seen even in the so-called 'situational' conversations where, for the sake of 'pumping' as many linguistic features as possible onto a short passage, a number of illogical and infuriating verbal exchanges are presented. The vacuousness of such language-samples are expertly parodied in "The Bald Primadonna" by Ionesco, where nonsensical pseudo-statements with no content whatsoever, about the most obvious facts around are mechanically repeated in the name of

human communication. The same holds true for the so-called pattern-drills as well, where hollow constructions are exercised in-vacuo, without any qualitative relation to the actual usage, very much to the consternation of the learner as well as to that of the teacher himself.

Despite the fact that human language is known to be full of grammatical deficiencies, to be used with so many grammatical mistakes, and to function against a high rate of misunderstanding, teaching programmes unrealistically require learners of a foreign-language to perform such tasks as handling all kinds of useless transformations, scanning superfluous paradigms, and providing synonyms or antonyms for words, all of which operations even the native speaker himself of the foreign-language in question might not achieve in most cases. As can easily be seen, such a perfectionistic attitude is again qualitatively different from the actual use of the language, hence carrying in itself all the inherent defects of this type of simulation.

It can plausibly be argued that such a qualitatively distorted simulation might not be so detrimental after all, because the teaching procedure consists of a series of graded stages, which are then hoped to be incorporated into a coherent whole, that means into what is purported to be the language in question. Such a patchworky or Frankensteinite procedure might be compared with some method of teaching how to swim, in which by asking the learner to dip various organs of his body in a bowl of water at different times, the teacher might expect the person in question to be able to swim in the sea itself. Such an approach can produce at best no more than a "collage effect" as in painting, or rather a "cinemontage effect" which never equals the 'real thing', although it might even surpass reality in its overall makebelieve force and scope.

It is, on the other hand, possible to present a language model which is only quantitatively different from the foreign-language in question. As a matter of fact, it goes almost without saying, that the child learns his mother-tongue as it is 'unfolded' to him, in a seemingly haphazard, yet always in a functionally relevant way. In direct opposition to this view is the attitude of the current programmes which indirectly assume that the child first learns the active voice, indicative mood, present tense, and then graduates systematically to passive, subjunctive, and past ; or that the child learns the names of the days and months, as well as those of the numbers in the same paradigmatic order. Systematicity should not necessarily mean a clean-cut and neat representation of the language phenomenon ; it might just as well designate the child's gradual but functional exploration of his mother-tongue. First of all, it can easily be

observed that the pacesetting during the learning process is fixed by the child himself who cannot be forced to reproduce linguistic forms unless he is ready for them. Just as the saturation point is reached when a melody is heard a sufficient number of times, and then the whole intonational pattern is spontaneously hummed with such relative ease, so can the teaching programmes be adjusted to grant the learners the right to set the pace of progress themselves, thus eliminating any arhythmicality between the two different tempi of the programmer and of the learner. Otherwise, any insistence on immediate reproduction before a suitable digestion period is over, will produce, as it does currently, an effect, similar to the one that would occur if a person were forced to inhale and blow a pipe at the same time.

In a similar way, it can easily be shown that the child acquires the language, first in terms of words pertaining to concrete objects, and then of holophrastic units, finally of more and more complex constructions. Consequently, all the phonetic distinctions, structural niceties, as well as transformations and lexical items that are not immediately relevant, can be 'squeezed out' of the language model, thus causing no qualitative difference at all. The time and energy thus saved, can profitably be employed in intensified exposure to the foreign-language, thus equalling the natural amount enjoyed by the child himself. Yet, so long as the model is a qualitatively distorted one, no intensive approach can hope to achieve the degree of proficiency and fluency, worth the time and energy expended.

Emergent

This type covers difficulties that are not an inherent part to the learning-teaching process, but are self-induced, so to speak, by the programmers and specialists themselves, in their dedication to their own narrow fields of vision.

Linguisticism

Perhaps a great deal of the existing difficulties in the field of "alianguage" instruction is caused by the lack of distinction between latent binarities. For instance, linguistics, as a theoretical and academic pursuit should be clearly differentiated from what may be called languagics, a combination of language itself plus pedagogics, a practical teaching methodology. As a matter of fact, it might be the preoccupation of the logico-linguistics with the functioning of language rather than with its function, that has proved detrimental to the pedago-languagics as such. It might not be wrong to state that the challenge of structural descriptions in a theoretically perfectionistic sphere has not been beneficially trans-

lated into the actual field of alianguage-instruction, because what is most needed is perhaps a psycho-socio-pedago-linguistics or "languagics" proper, rather than a logico-mathematical one.

The main difficulty with purely descriptional linguistics is that it treats language as a finished product, as a calculus, as a kind of closed-loop system which is structurally describable in a series of para-mathemctical statements. Language, however, seems to be an evolved and evolving activity, a kind of semi-nebulous process that could be stopped for better study, but should somehow be allowed to proceed if it is going to be utilized as a kind of organo-mechanism. As a matter of fact, language is known to have evolved in a diachronic manner through time ; whereas linguistics treats it in a simultaneous way, on the synchronic axis so to speak, treating each feature without any regard to its evolvement value, neither in the time-scale of the development of that language, nor in its actual usage by its speakers. Consequently, such a viewpoint of linguistic pertinency does not fit the actual languagic relevancy, thus ending in a kind of artificiality, in a methodological impasse. The presentation of the implicit grammar in the mind of the native speaker of the foreign-language, to a learner of that language in a explicit way and in a wholesale manner serves to satisfy only the linguisticists themselves, who seem to have been more concerned with the synchronously relevant distinctions and markers than with the onto-phylo-genetical development of language units and features.

Consequently, a logical way to get out of this linguisticistic impasse would be to divorce the actual and practical language-teaching from the theoretically deductive network of pure linguistic science. Yet, so long as languagicists are not sufficiently equipped linguisticswise to attack the theoretical pseudo-fortresses of linguistic schools whose over-enthusiastic zealots viciously attack, in their "plus royaliste que le roi" attitude, any challenge, any questioning of their latest convictions, the future of foreign-language instruction does not seem to be promising enough. As a matter of fact, the history of foreign-language teaching shows that there has always been a kind of pendulum action throughout centuries, according to which there was a shift between the poles of direct-grammar-direct-grammar-direct method on the one plane, and on the other, between those of spoken-written-spoken-written-spoken languages. A contributing factor to such a state of affairs is a kind of 'infantile prehensility', according to which any new method is unquestioningly embraced, to be subsequently discarded by others, equally vehemently. It is even more discouraging to observe that this kind of 'apostolicism', the blind adherence of disciples to one single viewpoint is becoming equally prominent in the

field of alianguage instruction as well, where the benefit of a feedback that is self-produced in the class should enable one to effect corrective measures in an inductive way. Therefore, unless the number of research centers, with a liberal but questioning policy rather than a ratificatory one, competes with those of the teaching centers, the existing pace of the alianguage instruction, marred by self-deception and occasional aggressiveness might not reach the objectives forecast for a United Europe, or for a United World for that matter.

Holisticism

Another major factor, contributing to the difficulties experienced in the field of foreign-language instruction seems to be the overambitious, all-encompassing and exhaustive approach of teaching all of the foreign-language field to all of the students at the same time and within a specified period. Such an unrealistic, improbable and unattainable goal, such a holistic attitude of "teach all to all", seems to be self-defeating and doomed to failure even at the very start. Whether such an approach is fostered by the conventional conditioning and naïveté of the language teachers, or by the over-pretentiousness of the programmers does not help the situation in practical terms. It is true that a certain degree of self-confidence is still detectable with some programmers and specialists who indeed achieve unequalled results in some special cases and under specific circumstances ; but this does not al all mean that the problem of mass-instruction in foreign languages has yet been satisfactorily solved.

A possible alternative to such a holistic attitude seems to be what may be called "fissurization", the process by which both the student-body as well as the language-field are categorized into homogeneous compartments, with only partial and modest aims being set forth for instructional purposes. The student-body can effectively be divided and even subdivided according to the personal profiles of the learners, namely according to their cultural background, their native proficiency, and their mental age. Similarly, the language-field itself can also be categorized into channels and skills, namely according to the passive comprehension and active "exprehension" on the one plane, and according to the spoken 'conversation' and written 'correspondence' on the other, with 'discourse' and 'text' as their substances. The so-called four language skills can in turn be subdivided into 'arenas', in terms of microglossaries, used in a specific field of activity, whether this happens to be daily conversation, commercial correspondence, or technical jargon.

Once the objectives are specified and the expedients are esta-

blished in terms of an "aims and means" formula, then by judicious couplings between various compartments of student-body and of language-field, some homogeneous "objexpedient units" of instruction can be obtained, each of which is then assigned a different, specific and selective schedule to fulfill the requirements. Such a reticulatory pattern of student-language engineering in terms of what may be called "studanguage" groups, might drastically reduce energy-leaks and redundancies suffered with conventional heterogeneous groupings and indeterminate goals. This does not at all mean that one group should not graduate and proceed through other schedules as well, finally covering the whole of the language field. It only means that the 'sandclock effect' of one at a time should be allowed to operate. Apart from the precedence of each language skill over the others, the main differentiating feature among various groups and their schedules might be in the field of vocabulary items rather than structural niceties as such. In fact, it might be necessary and advisable that each instructional unit should be provided with a pattern of lexis, based on an "egocentrifugal" expansion, namely starting with those items that have the utmost immediacy and relevancy to the learner, and then proceeding through whole blocks of semantic fields, again dictated by the requirement of the group's objectives and schedule.

REVERSALS

The underlying assumption in proposing some reversals is that although foreign-language teaching was not treated in a linguistically scientific way during the past, yet the current over-systematization might have gone far enough to be equally detrimental to effective teaching. In fact, the fashionable "structuphoria", still rampant in almost all linguistic thinking inevitably finds its reflexes in practical language-teaching as well, with the result that such structurophilic tendencies do blind programmers to the nature and functioning of language as a means of communication. It is, in actual fact, the semantic cargo, as carried by the words themselves that establishes the very raison d'être of human communication. It can, on the other hand, be argued that it is the structure that is of primary importance in language, because a mere string of words might not mean anything at all, if taken by themselves. It is true that the structural meaning does indeed indicate, by the mere existence of the structural markers, that 'someone did something somewhere sometime' ; but the human communication seems to rely less on such an abstract dimension of syntactics than on that of pragmatics within the framework of a system of semiotics. It might be profitable to distinguish, in this con-

nection, between possibilities and probabilities, stressing the fact that although the possibilities of a semantic combination among a number of words may be numerous on a theoretical plane, yet in actual communicative situations, the probabilities of a semantic association are very few, and even only one for most occasions. The implication of such a statement is that the basic elements in human communication are the lexical items, and that the structure is only secondary to words in actual usage, hence derivative. If one considers the phylo-genetic development of the human language from root morphemes into simple syntagmas and into complex sentences, there might be little justification for the current lexicophobia in most of the foreign-language teaching programmes. In fact, what is needed might be a lexicotropy, reversing the current trend by returning to words, satisfying the commonsensical 'lust for words' of the learners, not necessarily ignoring the structuralistic aspects of the language, which might come at later stages, for the purposes of polishing up rather than of shaping up, as is practiced now.

Moduleme

Although a sememe is considered to be the minimal functional unit of meaning, yet in practical terms, all sememes do not happen to have the same importance so far as their communicative function is concerned, as in the case of "five o'clock" where "o" is almost insignificant, although on a purely structural basis it has the same commutational value as the other two items. Granting that sememes of morphemes are 'modules' of meaning as such, it is still possible to introduce the term moduleme to designate those sememes which, in a relativistic scale, fulfill the communicative function, by their mere prominence and emphasis in both speech and writing ; as in "a cup of tea" for instance, where there are two modulemes "cup, tea" against four sememes or modules. It might perhaps not be considered pretentious to add that modulemes seem to be combined into a "macro-moduleme" in a breath-group as in "bacon and eggs" ; and macro-modulemes form a "super-moduleme" in a whole sentence, as in "if I were you, I wouldnt do it". Such a scheme does not exclude the function words from the class of modulemes, so long as they are properly stressed to signal structural differences, in which case they can be called 'syntactical indexes' or "syndexes", forming a considerably formal field of their own, under the name of syndexics, in close relation to a branch that might be called "syntagmantics", dealing with the semantic aspects of sentence structure.

The crucial point in the human language, especially in its comprehension aspect, is that communication seems to take place through

a cross-section of the 'peaks of meaning' which are in fact nothing but modulemes. Such a pattern recognition or such a gestaltic apprehension appears to be at the core of human communicational language, in contra-distinction to a system of structural markers that do not convey much beyond a certain point, at least not in practical communication situations.

One of the typical examples of such a word-centered interpretation of human communication can be seen in the newspaper headlines which, in their telegraphic style almost devoid of structural markers, do convey the intended message in terms of lexical items only, against all odds of theoretical possibilities of confusion and misunderstanding. It is also known that in machine translation, the possibility of deciphering a text in terms of lexical items despite the presence of structural deficiencies is considerably high, although the text may stylistically be wanting. These instances show that a mere string of words might suffice to convey information in most of the cases. The fact that blurred speech, whether due to external interference or to slovenly pronunciation or to imperfect recording, can still be understood, might indicate that messages are conveyed, after all, through relatively prominent sememes or modulemes rather than through a clear sentence structure. A similar mechanism can be observed in the work of an interpreter who detects the modulemes in one spoken language, rendering them immediately in another, while the same person takes a much longer time when he attempts to translate the same language-sample, because all the structural niceties in that case have to be given in full. As a further example of the predominance of modulemes over structure can be cited the cases of remembering jokes and anecdotes, and retelling them much later, which would be next to impossible if structural devices were to be retained in memory, rather than modulemes themselves. Similarly, the same holds true for solving charades where mere gestures seem to act more as modulemes as such rather than as structural devices. Actually, if mere structural points were sufficient to convey the full message, then almost all poems or technical jargon could have been easily understood, which is however not the case ; because, it is the deficient mastery of modulemes that prevents one from deciphering such language-samples, even in the case of the native language itself.

The reason why modulemes are by themselves sufficient in conveying messages might be the fact that the communication process seems to function less in terms of transferring information than of activating 'releasers' of information in the transceiver's mind, just as a money-order does not actually send any tangible currency but merely releases the funds at the receiving end of the channel. Once such a model of anticipatory or probabilistic interpretation of communication is accepted, rather than a

possibilistic one, then practical language-teaching can beneficially be separated from the theoretical linguistics in that human communication happens to be, in most cases, no more than a phatic communion, based on stereotyped situations and on previous knowledge. Consequently, what is generally needed for the transference of messages is not the whole structural yet mostly superfluous framework, but merely modulemes, whether they are lexemes or syndexes, for the purpose of indicating formats, so to speak, for messages. The stereotyped and redundant features are easily supplied by the transceiver who thus completes the gaps in the sentencial message by his supposedly 'extra-codal', yet in fact previously stored knowledge. Such a process may be called, for want of a better term, the complenishment factor in human communication, as can be clearly observed in this piece of advertisement : "Burçak... non ? ... alors... Berlitz", where the message is fully transferred in terms of modulemes, and despite the lack of structural markers, all due to the operation of the complenishment factor. This process of moduleme-cum-complenishment is at work in the so-called speed-reading skill, which is in actual fact nothing but 'skip' reading ; that means, skipping ordinary modules and concentrating on actual modulemes, while learning to capture, in later stages, macro-modulemes, and ultimately super-modulemes in a photographic manner. Unless however the modulemes are properly known in their presented contexts, comprehension should be impossible even on a non-skip reading basis. Such a state of affairs can be expressed in the seemingly paradoxical rule : "one can only unterstand what one already knows".

Starting from the premise that "too few modulemes make a jumble", one can prescribe in foreign-language teaching, a thorough-going training in lexical items, assuming that most of the current ills and illnesses in instruction might be due to the 'word-starvation' of learners as well as to their 'structural obesity'. Since the learner of a foreign-language is ready and ripe to learn words in that language, to the extent his educational background and intellectual capacity allow him, therefore the excuse that "one should learn to walk before running" should never be allowed to interfere with the Sprachgefühl of the striving learner.

Pre-semanticization

It seems to be a universally accepted argument that human language represents a process of "code-munication" par excellence, and that this code is utilized to express the Experience of the Reality in the Universe. As a corollary, it can also be added that while each language is a code in its own right, a foreign-language is relatively a second code with respect to any other language. In practical terms, the learner of a

foreign-language is thus simultaneously faced with a double-layer of codes, namely the experiencial code of his native-tongue, and the linguistic code of the foreign-language. This duplex character of the foreign-language, or this state of "coduplexity" as it might be called, appears to be one of the stumbling blocks in the instruction of foreign languages.

With the acquisition of the experiencial code in the mother-tongue being solved for the child in the most natural manner, the duplex nature of a foreign-language seems to be largely ignored in actual instruction. Consequently, foreign-language instruction suffers unnecessary hardships, mainly due to this disregard for coduplexity, hence the nature of human language as such. Therefore it might be helpful to remember that the child is first presented the experience of the world, with the medium of language being presented simultaneously or subsequently, rather than previously ; whereas in foreign-language instruction it is the language that is first administered, which fact thus going against the grain of the natural approach. The learning process for the child is not so much learning words as observing various objects, states and actions around him, and then proceeding to perceive how they are expressed in vocal symbols by people nearby. With such a spontaneous and simultaneous 'synchromesh' between experiencial items and linguistic units, the problem of direct association, and later on, that of competence is solved once for all.

The situation of the foreign-language learner is, however, like that of a person who tries to learn how to ride a bicycle or how to swim. Although the main thing should be to stay atop or afloat first, yet the tendency of the novice is, almost invariably, to propel himself forward by frantic movements. Instead of attacking such a process simultaneously, one could very well manage to be towed forward by some other means of transport which would allow him to concentrate on mastering the art of staying on top of the two-wheeler or on the surface of the water. When transferred to the scene of foreign-language instruction, it is possible to observe that the current tendency seems to present the foreign-language as a kind of problem that should be solved at all costs. Although the solution or meaning might later be supplied by the programmer, such a procedure of "post-decipherment" is nothing more than a game of puzzle-solving, or 'conundrumism' par excellence. With the energy and attention of the student being expended on the puzzle, and with the main preoccupation being to reach the underlying and hidden semantic content, it just so happens that the linguistic code of the foreign language is somehow 'skipped' during the process. It should be possible, however, to effect a psycho-pedagogical reversal by first presenting the learner with the intended meaning, given and explained in the native language, and then

allowing him to conclude, in the most natural and inductive manner, how the familiar experience is expressed through what features in the linguistic code of the foreign-language. Such a process of pre-semanticization should relieve the learner of the burden of solving puzzles, thus permitting him to utilize his energy in mastering the complexities of the foreign-language code, although such premastication could gradually be reduced to the extent the learner proceeds towards full mastery of the code.

Trans-interfusion

According to the fashionable linguistic philosophy, a foreign-language is considered as a set of behavious patterns, qualitatively different from those of the native-tongue. Such a notion establishes, however, an inevitable 'linguistic gap' between the two languages, which should somehow be cleared by a sufficiently huge quantum leap. Although such a viewpoint is correct so far as structural variations are concerned, yet in terms of lexical units, or rather modulemes as such, the difference between the native-tongue and the foreign-language is merely quantitative, the foreign-language being merely an extension of the native-tongue with some more lexemes added to the stock. As a matter of fact, it can easily be observed that words are easily borrowed from one language to another, and can newly be created on various occasions with almost no limit to their number, whereas the same cannot be said of structures. Since words are 'neuter' units as such, they can be used in any language either as synonyms if the corresponding concepts already exist, or as neologisms if the concepts are not yet given a linguistic form. One should easily sense the enormous methodological advantage to be gained in connecting the foreign-language to the native-tongue, since such a word-oriented approach would open up a new and accessible vista to millions of foreign-language learners who, despite their excellent command of, and proficiency in, their native vocabulary, still feel inadequate and frustrated on current teaching programmes whose structural differentiations prove too much for adults to digest.

Under the light of the preceding argument, one can distinguish between a 'differential' approach which presumes that the foreign-language is a qualitatively different one, that can be reached in a saltatory manner, and a 'gradient' approach which proposes that the foreign-language is merely a quantitatively different version of the native-tongue, thus attainable through a series of approximations in a gradual manner, first in terms of words, then of syntagmas, and finally of whole sentences.

As a matter of fact, such a state of affairs almost automatically

occurs during what is called the 'code-switching' action, when the interlocutors end up with a mixed language as a result of shifting between two codes, whether these concern dialectal differences within a language or those between two distinct languages. Whatever such a mixture is called - pidgin, creolese, franglais, deutschlish - it cannot be denied that it serves as even a more powerful instrument of communication on most occasions. Various degrees of such a "languese" can easily be observed, especially in cosmopolitan circles where it operates with a very high degree of efficiency, whether the occasion for using it is pure expediency or half-snobbishness.

A typical example of such a procedure as clearing a seemingly unbridgeable space can be given from the field of electronics where feeble audio-waves are superimposed, for interspacial transmission, on powerful electro-magnetic carrier waves, through the process of 'modulation'. Following the same line, one can propose a similar procedure for the foreign-language instruction by which the native sentence is taken as the carrier wave or as the 'template' structure on which any acquired units of the foreign-language are superimposed, thus producing various degrees of approximations towards the intended foreign sentence. As a simple example of such a process of trans-interfusion, according to which not only lexical items but also constructional patterns can be gradually injected onto the native basic sentence, the following might be given for the occasion :

The price of this film includes its processing by Kodak but not its printing
The price of this film includes its traitement by Kodak but not its tirage
Le prix of this film comprend its traitement by Kodak but not its tirage
Le prix de ce film comprend son traitement par Kodak mais non son tirage

Although such an 'incremental' approach requires that the intermunicators should have a certain degree of command of both the native- and foreign-languages, yet it has some distinct and undeniable advantages :

a. Since the starting-point is the familiar native sentence, and since there is no immediate obligation of modulating it, the fear or inhibition of committing structural mistakes is almost virtually removed.
b. Due to the allowance that the learner is free to use as few or as many units and patterns as he acquires or as he wishes, the frustratingly long waiting period, before a relatively complex sentence can be attempted is automatically eliminated.
c. The fact that the learner has the opportunity of being able to communicate all the time, while he keeps practicing whatever he acquires, is an

invaluable boost to his morale.
d. The last but not the least benefit might be the possibility of self-instruction as such, because the learner can practice by himself without any fear of mistakes, or any need of correction for that matter.

In conclusion, one can reiterate that partly due to the inherent problems of simulational instruction and partly due to the linguistic academism, the practical work of foreign-language instruction seems to have been squeezed in a pedagogical bottleneck from which it might be extricated only by a shift of directionality. A less preconceived and more perceptive evaluation of the human language and its communicative function might point the way towards a more 'natural' procecedure of foreign-language instruction.